



The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Infrastructure & Transportation

Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz

On February 13, 2009, Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz (TX-27) joined the majority of the House of Representatives in passing H.R.1, the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*. This historic piece of legislation will save and create approximately 3.5 million jobs, stimulate the nation's economy, and transform the economy to promote long-term growth and stability. In Texas, approximately 269,000 jobs will be saved or created as a result of this legislation.

Enhancing Our Nation's Infrastructure

H.R. 1 appropriates \$48 billion to the Department of Transportation for "shovel ready projects" that will be distributed to states via formula grants and discretionary grants. Texas' share alone for highways and bridges is \$2.25 billion. Projects that receive funding will be selected by the Texas Transportation Commission and the state's Metropolitan Planning Organization. Texas is also expected to receive \$372 million for transit, and additional funding for general aviation and rail projects. No matching local or state funds for these projects will be required. However, projects that improve the safety of the transportation system, have statewide significance or regional priority, leverage or pool resources, create long-term economic benefits and are located in economically distressed areas will be given priority by the Texas Transportation Commission and the state's Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO). Additionally, states must "use-or-lose" funding; fifty percent of all highway and bridge funding must be obligated within 120 days from the date the states receive their apportionments or funds may be forfeited.

Sub-allocations to large, mid-size and small MPOs in Congressional District 27:

Corpus Christi MPO:	\$9,514,791
Brownsville MPO:	\$7,809,328
Harlingen San-Benito MPO:	\$5,218,121

To address flood protection, navigation infrastructure and environmental restoration projects, H.R. 1 appropriates \$4.6 billion to the Army Corps of Engineers for construction and operation and maintenance of project backlogs. The legislation directs the Corps to prioritize projects that can be completed using funding provided by the bill in an expeditious manner and projects, programs or activities that are labor-intensive. The agency expects that 33,000 direct and 91,800 indirect jobs could be created as a result of the funding.

To address the needs of southern Border States' flood control issues, the International Boundary and Waterway Commission has been appropriated \$37,500,000 for emergency repair and rehabilitation requirements as a result of the 2008 storm season.

Homeland Security and the Economy

Recognizing sea and land ports of entry contributions to the economy, the Department of Homeland Security has been appropriated \$2.75 billion for infrastructure construction and improvements. Of that amount \$160 million is for non-intrusive inspection technology at ports.

\$420 million is provided for repair and construction at land points of entry to improve border security, trade and travel facilitation and reduce wait times. To reduce wait times at airports, \$1 billion has been provided to the Transportation Security Administration to improve baggage handling, reduce congestion at terminals and improve airport lobbies. Additionally, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has been provided \$300 million for grants for state and local programs, of which \$150 million is for port security grants.

Honoring Our Nation's Military Families and Veterans

To stimulate the economy while improving the quality of life for our service men and women, the Department of Defense has been appropriated \$2.33 billion for family housing, hospitals and child care centers. Additionally, the Department of Defense has been provided \$4.2 billion to invest in facility energy efficiency projects and improve and repair existing infrastructure. To address long-term care needs of our veterans, \$1.2 billion has been provided to the Veterans Affairs Department for veteran's hospital and medical facility's construction and improvement.

Accountability and Transparency of Taxpayer Investment

Funds appropriated in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will be distributed via existing formulas and programs with proven track records when possible. Through various measures, the legislation promotes swift obligation of funds to immediately stimulate the economy, while still ensuring transparency and accountability. Measures are in place so that taxpayers will be able to see exactly how their investment in our nation's economy is being spent at <http://www.recovery.gov/>. Any obligation of funds by a federal, state or local entity and all competitive grants must be posted for the public on this website. There are no earmarks in this bill.

To find out more information concerning infrastructure and science investment in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, please visit <http://ortiz.house.gov/> and <http://www.recovery.gov/>.

If you have any concerns or need more information, please write or call our offices:

2110 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone (202) 225-7742

3649 Leopard, Suite 510
Corpus Christi, TX 78408
Phone (361) 883-5868

1805 Ruben Torres Blvd., B-27
Brownsville, TX 78521
Phone (956) 541-1242

Or visit us online at: <http://ortiz.house.gov>